

Remarks

The Applicant thanks the Office for the consideration given the present application in the Detailed Action mailed January 3, 2005. With the foregoing amendments and the ensuing remarks, the Applicant has endeavored to respond most properly to each of the issues raised in the Detailed Action to ensure that the specification and claims now presented are allowable in all respects. With this in mind, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Office review and allow the current specification and claims.

In summary, the present application was filed with 33 claims in total with claims 1 and 20 standing independently. In the first amendment in this matter, the Applicant relied on the Office's indication of allowability of the claims and canceled claims 1 and 20 and rewrote claims 9, 17, 22, and 30 to stand independently while amending other claims for proper dependency. With the present amendment, claims 9, 14-16, 21, and 30-33 have been canceled thereby leaving claims 2-8, 10-13, 17-19, and 22-29 remaining for consideration.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 103 / Allowable Subject Matter

In the Detailed Action, the Office rejected claims 9-14, 21, and 30-33 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,452,407 to Crook in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,687,392 to Touzawa. The Office additionally rejected claims 2 and 3 as being rendered obvious by Crook when combined with Touzawa and U.S. Patent No.

6,246,468 to Dimsdale. Further, the Office found claims 4-5 and 15-16 unpatentable over Crook in light of Touzawa and U.S. Patent No. 5,530,652 to Croyle et al. However, the Office allowed claims 17-19, 6-8, and 22-29.

Again in reliance on the Office's indication, the Applicant has canceled claims 9, 14-16, 21, and 30-33 and has amended claims 2-5 and 10-13 to depend from either allowed claim 17 or allowed claim 22. With this, the Applicant believes all remaining claims are in condition for allowance.

In making the foregoing amendments, however, the Applicant notes that it believes reasonable arguments could be made in favor of the allowability of one or more of the rejected claims. For example, contrary to the Office's indication, rejected, and now canceled, claim 30 did not recite identical limitations to claim 9 but instead added further limitations that would reasonably support patentability. For this and further reasons, it should be appreciated that the accompanying claim amendments were carried out merely to expedite the allowance of the present application and should not be deemed to limit the protection afforded by the remaining claims, including the equivalents potentially to be covered thereby.

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully submits that all presently pending claims are in condition for allowance in all respects. With this in mind, the Office's reconsideration and allowance of the specification and claims 2-8, 10-13, 17-19, and 22-29 are most

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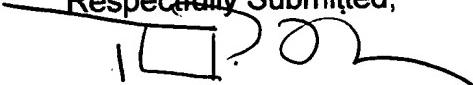
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respectfully requested.

The Applicant believes that all issues raised in the Detailed Action have been responded to fully. However, if, after consideration of the above amendments and comments, there remain any open issues in this application that possibly can be resolved by a telephone interview, then the Applicant's undersigned attorney most respectfully requests that he be called to discuss and attempt to resolve those issues.

March 29, 2005
Date

Respectfully Submitted,


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March 29, 2005

Date